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ABSTRACT

An addition to the "wholeness of language" debate, this document is divided into two sections. The first reviews theories regarding the reading writing relationship, suggesting that an awareness of the interdependencies and commonalities among various forms of communication may provide insights leading to students learning to read like writers and write like readers. The second section describes and critiques a study conducted by Braun and Gordon (1983) that explored the effects of narrative writing instruction on reading comprehension. This section highlights the methodological problems (including the failure to provide students with a purpose or an audience for their writing, or the opportunity to revise and edit their work) and misguided assumptions that led to inconclusive results. The critique concludes that (1) research problems must be formulated within the context of a holistic approach to language, (2) research design must provide for observation of the steps in the learning process, and (3) research design must also provide for observation of the cognitive transition from writer-based to reader-based writing. A separate "response," by Robert D. Armstrong is appended to the critique. It elaborates on the previous conclusions regarding the importance of the "wholeness of language" perspective and the means of making the common elements of language competencies available for use. (LLZ)

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Reading/Writing Connections: A Case Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

"Sometimes when I want to know if my writing is clear, I leave it for a few days. Then when I come back to it, I sometimes don't know what I meant with certain parts so I know it won't be clear to other people. In a way I'm the reader."

These are the reflections of Penny, a ten year-old language education clinic client, who in a writing conference with a peer explained how she went about the process of revision. Three months earlier Penny's primary preoccupation in the revision process centered on searches for mechanical problems and little more than random approaches to the correction of such problems. What is significant about Penny's present comment is that it reflects a dramatic shift from a concern over form and surface features of text to a concern over the central place of meaning in the composing process. What is equally significant is the fact that she intuitively assumes both reader and writer roles in the process of writing. The most exciting transformation that has been observed is that Penny, in her emerging dual role, is beginning to make changes in surface level and mechanical features because these changes are necessary to make sense of her own text. Mechanics are no longer ends; they are a means toward fine-tuning in the writing process. In other words, Penny has made important strides in establishing a link with an unseen, unheard participant in the total meaning making process.

The question of means and ends, and parts and wholes, has been a topic of considerable debate in the past decade. The general question is closely linked with the problem of identifying what is "skill" and what is "sub-skill" and, of course, the pervasive problem of attempting to devise

hierarchies which will somehow help to inform pedagogy. Rogers (1982), in a rather scathing attack on "poor" teaching in the three R's, holds that trivialization of instruction has resulted from educators' belief that breaking up subject matter into smaller and smaller parts will result in more efficient mastery of the whole. He perceives a cause-effect relationship between the steady increase in the testing/teaching of sub-skills and the growing decline in secondary students' ability to distinguish between the cornerstone components (the sub-skills) and the building itself, i.e., the sub-skills are taught as though they were the building.

Rogers' attack raises important questions about what is part and what is viewed as whole. If we consider reading and writing as totally discrete entities, we are looking at two "buildings". If we consider reading and writing as part of a large meaning making framework we are looking at a massive "building". It is the consideration of a such major common link between reading and writing that has the potential to expose a more inclusive spectrum of "skills", or perhaps, processes. Perhaps, more important, it suggests a view taken through a "wide angle lens" and thus, provides the potential for consideration of an increased range of possible relationships and interrelationships among the parts that make up the whole.

It is not surprising that the search for broadened perspectives in reading and writing is a relatively recent development. The lack of research attempting to link text production and text comprehension can be explained by the way in which the two processes have traditionally been conceptualized. Viewed through the microscope of behavioral psychology the two typically have been seen as separate domains each with its own

special set of sub-skills, one the mirror image of the other (Kucer, 1984a). Further, the two processes have held distinctly dichotomous positions on the active/passive continuum. Reading has been regarded primarily as a passive process involving abstraction of the author's intended meaning from text. Implicit in such a view is the notion that meaning is indigenous to the text. The reader is viewed as a passive receiver of a message as opposed to a creative, language processor who constructs meaning. Writing, on the other hand, has been perceived as a more active process of generating ideas, structuring and encoding meanings. However, till recently, writing has been viewed as a linear process through which the writer moved systematically through prewriting, writing and rewriting phases. Implicit in the perceived process was the notion that writers, in the prewriting phase, formulate what they are going to say in text. In other words, the generation of ideas had already taken place and writing was primarily a matter of putting those ideas down on paper.

Dramatic paradigm shifts in both reading and writing, stimulated at least in part by current thrusts in cognitive psychology, have broadened the perspective of both domains. This breadth of perspective brought about by a growing preoccupation with the investigation of processes underlying both reading and writing, has led to a recognition that many obvious commonalities obtain between the two processes. The reader is no longer viewed as a passive decoder getting information from the "conveyor belt of the printed page." By the same token, the writer is no longer seen as the sole encoder of meaning. The text is no longer viewed as controlling the reading process. According to Britton (1970), writing like reading, involves interpretation:

> There is a whole world of experience to be interpreted, and writing is a major means of interpreting it....Everytime a child succeeds in writing about something that has happened to him...he has interpreted, shaped, coped with, some bit of experience (p. 29).

The interest in writing as an interpretive process has been paralleled with the study of writing beyond the sentence level. Both reading and writing, then, are perceived first and foremost as meaning making engagements. Both are purposeful, social, constructive acts. Both processes are contextually constrained by a range of variables, some external to the reader/writer, some internal. Both are language encounters; both are cognitive engagements; to varying degrees, both are social engagements.

Recognition of the commonalities evident in reading and writing as social/cognitive/linguistic encounters, sets the stage for more intensive investigation not only of the interrelationships between the two, but also of interdependencies that obtain. Awareness of the interrelationships and interdependencies, however, is no more than a starting point in informing pedagogy. What is needed is continued examination of the nature of these interdependencies. Knowledge of the more specific nature has potential for insights that may lead to learning environments in which reading and writing may be seen as mutually-facilitative engagements, and it seems reasonable that such would be the ultimate justification for the current interest in exploring reading/writing relationships. However, the realizations of these insights await continued research conceptualized within perspectives which are sufficiently comprehensive to invite examination of a range of variables aimed toward the broad goal of making meaning.

The purpose of this paper is to critique one study which aimed to explore reading/writing relationships, and to highlight methodological problems and misguided assumptions which, in the study, may have masked a range of interesting interrelationships. The intent is to suggest, at least by implication, modifications in problem formulations and design which might facilitate discussion of research designs that may lead to a fuller understanding of reading/writing connections. The context for the discussion is an abbreviated report of an instructional study recently conducted at the University of Calgary (Braun and Gordon, 1983).

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed to explore effects of writing instruction (using story grammar) on reading comprehension. The study was motivated by an interest in research which has demonstrated that readers use knowledge of narrative structure to comprehend stories (Mandler and Johnson, 19770 Rumelhart, 1978; Stein and Glenn, 1977; Thorndyke, 1977). The more specific direction came from a recent study by Gordon and Braun, (1982) which demonstrated that reading instruction centered on aspects of story grammar produced positive results across a range of both reading and writing demands, and, further, that such instruction effected changes in the writing of narratives.

Procedures

Sample and Design

The subjects were 54 fifth grade students, drawn from a school in a middle class community in Calgary, Alberta. Individual subjects were randomly assigned to experimental and control (comparison) groups. The independent variable was the type of instruction provided for one hour in

each of 15 sessions spaced over a five-week period. The dependent variables were 1) number of text structure categories included in recall protocols following the reading of an unfamiliar narrative; 2) responses to wh-probes keyed to specific text structure categories and to three additional taxonomic categories - textually-explicit, textually-implicit and scriptally implicit; 3) scores on the Canadian Gates McGinitie Reading Text (Form D); 4) number of text structure categories included in independently written compositions; and 5) holistic scores on independently written compositions. Dependent measures were administered immediately after intervention and after a six-week delay (except for the standardized reading test).

Instructional Methods

The experimental group received instruction in the writing of narratives. Instruction was designed explicitly to heighten awareness of narrative text structure. The general instructional guidelines included modeling of the writing process with emphasis on monologuing and self-questioning in the planning/decision-making process, discussion and diagramming, use of macro-cloze procedures, group and independent writing. These same general instructional guidelines were used with the control (comparison) group, except that poetry writing, rather than narrative writing, was the focus of instruction.

Scoring

Propositions in subjects' written recall protocols were compared to validate macrostructures of each narrative and designated to specific text structure categories. Carefully validated criteria were used to score the open-ended responses to wh-probes. Propositions used in subjects' independent conpositions were classified into specific text structure

categories. For all scoring procedures reliabilities of three independent raters exceeded .90. Any discrepancies were settled through discussion.

The holistic scoring procedures were used to obtain a global impression of the quality of the compositions. Each composition was judged on a scale designed for holistic judgements. A five-point rubric (Very High, High, Average, Low, Very Low) was used in this evaluation. Three independent raters judged the compositions. Blind procedures were employed with respect to individual subjects, group designation, and testing session (pre-, post- or delayed).

Analysis of Data

Initial analyses showed no significant differences between experimental and control groups on any of the pre-measures (Gates McGinitie Vocabulary and Comprehension, Holistic Writing Scores, Wh-probes scores, total text structure, categories following reading, total text structure categories in writing).

Instruction and Reading Outcomes. Since it was determined that the distributions of scores on dependent measures deviated markedly from normality, the decision was made to analyze the data using non-parametric procedures. The Mann Whitney U test was used as the main test of significance. No significant differences between groups were found on total number of text structure categories produced in written recalls following the reading of an unfamiliar narrative. Further, no significant differences were determined in the use of specific text structure categories (eg. initiating event, attempt, etc.). Comparison of scores on wh-probes revealed no significant differences between experimental and control groups. Further, no significant differnces were noted between groups on literal and inferential comprehension categories. However,

there was significant difference on the comprehension subtest of the Gates McGinitie Test (Z = 2.14, p .05;) in favour of the experimental group.

What is noteworthy is the fact that both groups increased the number of text categories in their recalls on the post-test, and then dropped on the delayed post-test. There was evidence that classroom instruction in summarization skills may have affected the results on the post-test as many of the subjects attempted a summary of the narrative.

Instruction and Writing Outcomes. Again, non-parametric (Mann Whitney) tests were run on writing measures because of the nature of the distribution of data.

As in the case of the reading data, the number of text structure categories increased markedly for both the experimental and control groups on the immediate post-test and then declined on the delayed post-test. The evidence of influence of instruction in summarization is believed to account for the decline.

The pattern revealed in the qualitative aspects of writing suggest some increase for the experimental groups, however not significantly, over that of the control group. The correspondence between the holistic scores on the pre- and immediate post-tests indicated a trend more dissimilar between experimental and control groups than the scores on text structure categories. The experimental group, in fact, increased by .6 (out of a possible score of 10). What is interesting is that the mean score on the delayed post-test was higher than that of the pre-test. The holistic scores of the control group, on the other hand, showed a gradual though not a statistically significant decline.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

Universals in Reading and Writing

A major assumption underlying a study like the one reported here is that readers and writers develop a single language process that expresses itself in alternate forms. That is, there exists a "shared core" (Atwell, 1983) drawn upon by language users. Burke (1978) assumes the possession of a pool of language data constituted of a set of relations concerning how meaning is shared through langauge. Data for the pool may enter as any language expression (listening, speaking, reading, or writing) and exit as any of the expressions. The view that reading and writing processes draw from the basic mechanisms has also been proposed by Beaugrande (1982), van Dijk (1979), and Harste, Burke and Woodward (1982). Kucer (1984a) sees reading and writing as "one instance of text world production, drawing from a common pool of cognitive and linguistic operations" (p. 5). Implicit in generalizations like these is the assumption that what is learned in one language encounter becomes data for use in other encounters (Wilson, 1981). Such certainly was the basic assumption underlying the design of the study reported here.

It is possible that the instructional procedures of this study may have generated a data pool (at least for some subjects) more like collections of "items" to be stored and retrieved than as cognitive/linguistic "sets of relations" or process "operations". The instructional strategies were, indeed, designed to extend the pool, and ostensibly to facilitate awareness of items in the pool. A follow-up examination of individual subjects' profiles revealed that, indeed, more experimental than control subjects showed changes in perfomrance from pre- to post-tests. However, the nature of these changes varied dramatically. Some

subjects showed marked gains in the number of text structure categories included in both writing and post-reading recall tasks. Further, some of these subjects displayed improved ability to create cohesive links both at local and global discourse levels. However, other subjects simply generated more categories, in at least a few instances less cohesive than than those produced in the pre-experimental tasks. Another sub-group showed no increase in the range of text structure categories produced but demonstrated at least some modification in both local and global cohesion. While a number of subjects demonstrated remarkable parallelism across reading and writing tasks, at least seven subjects reflected highly discrepant performance across tasks.

The result of this study, confirms what conventional wisdom has long held, that a common instructional experience does not necessarily guarantee a common learning experience. It may be that for some subjects the data pool of items was simply extended. It may well be that the items were viewed as little more than isolated entities, or perhaps new labels for already existing categories. Certainly, the instructional procedures could be criticized for over emphasis on surface features of text, albeit at both micro- and macro-structure levels. It is possible that for other subjects an awareness of the function of specific narrative features came to be realized. The somewhat mysterious difference in performance between experimental and control subjects on the standardized reading instrument adds nothing to the body of knowledge of the nature of reading/writing interdependencies.

To examine the nature of reading/writing interrelationships and interdependencies within a common "data pool" hypothesis framework, then,

demands closer examination of the nature of the data pool of individual subjects.

In the study cited, one major element from the possible pool of the cognitive/linguistic set of variables was singled out -- that of rules for narrative discourse. To explain differences between subjects' performance (pre-, during, and post-experimental treatment) even within the limitations of the restricted sampling from the "pool", one might conceptualize A and B (Figure 1) as structural schemata available for reading and writing processes respectively. The shaded intersects (A_1, B_1) represent awareness of text structure availability to text comprehension and composition respectively. C represents the awareness of the learner that the pool of structural data is available to be drawn upon for both comprehension of text and generation of text. In addition, C includes knowledge of how and when to apply such knowledge in comprehension, conposition and monitoring/repair processes. C, then represents the aspects of metacognitive knowledge without which mutually facilitating changes in either reading or writing are likely to be non-existent, or idiosyncratic at best.

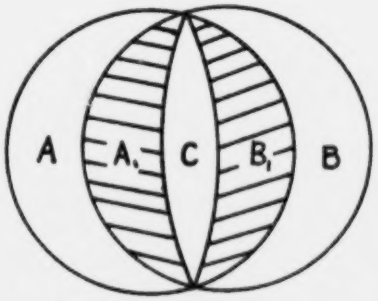

Figure 1

Structural Schemata in Reading and Writing

It would appear that research efforts aiming to explore reading/writing relationships in depth, must address much more seriously the C component. To what extent are subjects using knowledge of structures in reading and/or writing intuitively? To what extent are other subjects already aware of the availability of structures within the context of either reading or writing demands at least to activate relevant structural schemata? To what extent have some subjects already gone beyond the awareness/availability phase -- to gain control over text structure in either text comprehension and/or generation? Finally, have some subjects already become aware of the fact that availability and control in one of the modes can possibly facilitate control in the alternate mode? Indeed, such variants in learner knowledge and control may well have accounted for some of the differences in learning outcomes in the study reported here.

From a design standpoint a number of problems stand out. First, assessment procedures were not sensitive to the distinction between schema availability and knowledge of schema application. On-going monitoring throughout the project would have been necessary in order to observe evidence of changes in knowledge acquisition and application of individual subjects. Even more emphasis on qualitative analyses would have been essential in order to obtain such data. A major flaw in the design was the limitation imposed on the experimental treatment. Instruction was limited to B and B_1 only (figure one). In order to explore more fully the extent to which comprehension and composition are "basic reflections of the same cognitive process" (Squire, 1983; p. 582), it would seem reasonable that experimental instruction should engage subjects in both tasks, and that learning situations should provide highly varied opportunities for application to both tasks. Further, it would seem that more

fruitful explorations in C (figure one) could come from subjects' interaction about the nature of their thinking. Indeed, the work of Brown and others (1977, 1978, 1982) in metacognition, and Duffy and Roehler's (1981) investigations in reading demonstrate how thinking about the process of comprehending and "consciously considering the reconstructions that one composes, can enhance the basic process itself" (Squire, 1983; p. 582). Graves and Hansen (1982) report success in young children's ability to make connections between writing and reading as they are stimulated to verbalize about the process. It is only through modifications in design that take such factors into account that the potential for development of the "basic underlying process" can be adequately tested.

To summarize, to conceptualize research problems within a "shared core", "common pool" framework is only a starting point. What is needed is research to shed light on the conditions which specify when "what is learned in one language encounter becomes data for use in other encounters" (Wilson, 1981).

The Literacy Context

Acts of literacy are context dependent. Readers and writers vary in the degree of proficiency from one text to another. As conditions and contexts vary, so too will the process and the product of the literacy event (Beaugrande, 1980; Brandt, 1983; Graves, 1983; Kucer, 1984b; Sowers, 1979).

Perhaps the most serious pitfall of the research reported here is that subjects at best were engaged in a pseudo-literacy event. Such a criticism stems from at least three concerns; a) subject matter imposition; b) lack of purpose/intention for setting goals and plans, and for narrowing semantic and structural options, and c) the absence of an

audience that could possibly be perceived as interested in the literacy event.

Cognitive psychologists have demonstrated that, when linguistic abilities are held constant, the reader's schemata (prior knowledge and retrieval skill) may be the most influential variable in reading comprehension (Anderson, 1977; Pearson, 1978; Langer, 1982). The specific impact of content schemata on composition are less well known. However, since the process of writing involves generating, organizing and integrating ideas from LTM (Flower and Hayes, 1980) the role of prior knowledge seems paramount.

It is still a relatively common practice to make attempts to keep subject matter constant in experimental studies in order to allow for "valid" comparisons. Such was the rationalization for providing common narrative setting stimuli for writing. If such practice persists, it would seem reasonable to "equalize" prior knowledge through increased attention to pre-reading and pre-writing experiences (Graves, 1982).

A recent study by Kucer (1984b) highlighs the contextual dependency of literacy events. A sample of college students produced five texts under various types of cognitive, linguistic, and textual manipulations (both assigned and self-selected topics were included). Kucer found that irrespective of writer proficiency, the ability to control global coherence varied as writing conditions varied for the students. For all writers, control of coherence within one context was not predictive of control within other contexts. Equally important, different writers were affected differently by different tasks, and sensitive to different aspects of each writing condition. Control of coherence, at least for this sample, was highly context dependent.

Whether or not such variability would be evident for other forms of text (the Kucer study examined expository text only) is not known. However, the study raises serious questions about the aggregation of global pre-, post-, and delayed criterion measures assumed to be sensitive to changes attributable to instruction only. Kucer's cautions are worthy of serious consideration for every literacy research undertaken:

> Each context offers a unique set of variables which writers must negotiate and orchestrate....The [traditional] view typically holds that individual skills exist within the writing process and that these skills can be identified and isolated, practiced and mastered, and then used with the same degree of proficiency from one text to the next....Instead, any given strategy within the writing process only exists as part of a cybernetic system. As the context in which this system operates changes, so will the system and so too will the operation of individual strategies within the system (Kucer, 1984a; p. 16).

Kucer's findings (in writing) parallel what others (eg. Pichert and Anderson, 1977; Carey, Harste and Smith, 1981) have documented for reading comprehension. Context, including reader purpose, determines what is recalled from text and what is perceived as important information in text.

The context of the study considered here can be described as a typical classroom assignment context in which the task conditions are given in its barest form, a typical case of a "rigged, stage-managed situation" (Britton, 1970). Student purpose/intention was not considered either in writing or reading tasks. Another serious limitation is that no oportunity was given either for serious planning or revision. It is likely that the reader/writer connection comes to life most readily during the revision/editing processes as the writer moves back and forth as a reader and intermittently takes on the role of writer. Flower and Hayes (1980) make reference to the need for writers to integrate knowledge from LTM with specific demands of the writing task. The writer, in the

revision process, engages in considerable "juggling" of ideas, and this requires the ability (and perhaps facilitates the ability) to "read like a writer" and "write like a reader."

Research into the writing process (eg. Perl, 1980) has demonstrated that writers need to move forward and backwards as they plan, write and revise features of their writing, moving backwards to re-read sections of text before moving forward. Further, she noted that writers consistently returned to their notions of the topic to aid them in moving forward. Perl discovered that the most difficult pattern to document in recursive writing was the "felt sense" or internal feeling that the writer experienced during the composing process. Writers, in her study, paused to pay attention to their inner feelings in order to guide them in a specific direction such as re-reading, planning, or returning to produce more text. These "feelings", Perl concluded, involve knowing whether words have captured the intended meaning, if the writing has gone off track, or if the writing does not quite "say it". Neither time constraints or the general context in this study encouraged, or even allowed for such "retrospective structuring."

There was no occasion in this study for subjects to attempt to "read like writers" and vice versa, and, this perhaps is the most critical flaw in studies like this. A literacy event, by definition has a social dimension. Writing is not a literacy event if there is no audience to write to. The researchers, in this study, could hardly be considered an audience or they would not have demanded so many tasks of such similarity, and so many tasks without any feedback. The role of audience in writing has been highlighted by many. Flower and Hayes (1981), for example, contend that if the imagined reader has dropped out of his (the writer's)

decision process, he has made the choice of what to say easier but his chance of successful communication more remote because he has lost a goal against which to check his progress. Murray (1978) emphasizes audience consideration even at the stage when the writer is generating ideas about a given topic: "The writer becomes aware of a waiting audience, potential readers who want to know what the writer wants to say." (p. 376)

The question of audience raises at least two additional problems that are not addressed in the research reported here. First, would differences in text have surfaced had subjects been asked to write narratives to be read to peers later, narratives to be read by a "waiting audience" of eager second graders, or narratives for potential publicatior in a class collection for library circulation? Second, and closely related, which subjects were capable only of "writer-based" production. That is, which subjects were capable of decentering and considering the reader inspite of the tremendous congitive effort devoted to retrieval, selection and organization of information into cohesive and coherent networks? Some writers are able to retrieve and organize information while at the same time considering their audience. These writers move directly to "reader-based" composition; i.e., they can make a deliberate attempt to communicate with their audience. Some writers, however, cannot deal with all these demands at once, and therefore, drop one of the constraints (the reader), to be considered in the process of revision. These questions provide another layer of information for inclusion in sector "C" (figure one). It would seem that research in which the learning tasks, observation/assessment procedures, and design generally, are motivated by questions like these, has considerable potential for informing educators about the complex nature of reading/writing connections. Indeed, the

simplistic representation in figure one, while useful in raising a number of relevant research questions is inadequate since it does not address any aspect of the context within which literacy events operate.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Research into the nature of reading/writing connections must formulate problems within a perspective which considers the wholeness of language. It would seem that such research should enable observation of reading/writing interactions of the learner in attempts to determine the kinds of interplay, within and between processes, which lead to mutually-facilitative effects. Further, it seems essential that research paradigms must facilitate observations of varying contextual encounters to determine what happens in the process of learning to "write like a reader" and learning to "read like a writer". Penny's comment (page 1), "In a way I'm the reader" signals an awareness that she has made some very significant reading/writing connections. Perhaps, a careful documentation of Penny's move from a "writer-based" to a "reader-based" writer might, indeed, shed more light on the nature of reading/writing connections, than the analysis literally hundreds of pages of compositions and reading recall protocols of 54 captive research subjects.

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READING/WRITING CONNECTIONS: A CASE ANALYSIS -- A RESPONSE

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Introduction

One of the reasons why accumulated educational research may sometimes be disappointing, is that studies do not always grow out of a well conceived body of theory and, following the experimental investigation, results are not always turned back on the theory to illuminate, modify and strengthen the conceptual structure. For reasons other than these, the results of the research study which forms the core of the paper by Carl Braun probably disappointed the researchers. Of course, for seekers after truth, differences which are not significant should be as satisfactory as those which show dramatic change; but they rearely seem to be: perhaps because hypothesis based on sound theory should result in clear and significant differences in performance. From these points of view, the research study forming the basis of the paper was probably less than satisfying. Perhaps when knowledge of the interrelationships among the language arts improves, statements of theory may be more comprehensive and more precise and hypotheses firmly based on such theory will become prophetic.

In a sense the paper under consideration provides its own critique. Based on a clear statement of theory, the results of the study are presented in summary form. The final part of the paper makes an important contribution to an understanding of the relationships between reading and writing as it provides a re-examination of the study's theoretical base from the perspective of the study itself.

The present response, then, is not so much a critique as it is an attempt to support and extend two of the major principles established in the paper's final statement of theory. These will, first of all, be posed as questions and, finally, in the form of tentative look to the future.

1 What is the "wholeness of language" (Braun, p. 18) and how may that perspective enlighten our research and teaching?

2 How do writers learn to write as readers and, more

generally, how may items in the "shared core" (p. 9) of language competencies be made available for use?

The Wholeness of Language

It seems clear that an understanding of how language develops should, perhaps more than any other single factor, help to provide direction for the learning and teaching of language. Such an understanding would certainly include an examination of language development from a number of perspectives:

- the processes and products that are characteristic of effective listening, speaking, reading and writing
- important differences among various language uses, e.g., the differences between reading a story and telling a story
- the ways in which language competencies are fed into the shared core of understanding and the procedures by which they may best be released for use in novel contexts

The study of language should most profitably be from a holistic or socio-psycholinguistic perspective. Shuy (1981) has advocated the study of linguistic forms within a meaningful context within a real social context: for example, a study of syntax as part of a written description of a trip through the mountains as part of a letter to Uncle John who helped to finance the trip. Halliday (1978) has made the same point.

> Language comes to life only when functioning in some environment. We do not experience language in isolation -- but always in relation to a scenario, some background of persons and actions and events from which the things are said to derive their meaning (p. 28).

Such language study must compare and contrast varied uses of language within all language arts: in supporting the need for an ethnography of reading and writing, Stubbs (1982) has said that an understanding of the relationships between spoken and written language is central to any theory of literacy.

Bruce et al. (1982) have contributed to an understanding of the

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nature of various kinds of linguistic communication by comparing such language uses as being in a conversation and writing a story. Among differences relating to the medium are the separability of characters: in conversations, the source of each utterance is clear; in stories, the author must use linguistic devices to provide the same information. In terms of the message, conversations wander erratically while in stories topical coherence is required.

Gundlach (1981) has discussed the flow of syntactic competence by suggesting that reading, speech patterns, personal preference for certain kinds of sentence structures, and the dynamics of the writing task all make a contribution to the syntax the child author may use in writing. He, also, discussed the crossover effect so that after about age ten the child's syntax in writing becomes more complex than his syntax in speech.

Klein (1977) has looked within the uses of both external and internal talk and the ways in which ideas are developed and expressed by the child using a closely related series of covert and overt actions. The audience is one of four important factors impinging upon the talk situation (p. 14-15).

It would seem to be a mistake, however, to think of a rather static pool of listening, speaking, reading and writing components ready for use when called upon. There obviously exists a rather complicated set of interrelationships tying the components together. While the understanding of the nature of language development has increased rapidly during the last few years, it is far from complete. Continuing efforts to understand language development as a holistic phenomenon should further advance both our ability to design sound research and effective instructional strategies.

To Write Like a Reader

While all of the language arts in many of their possible uses continue to develop throughout the life of the learner, listening and speaking are first available for linguistic presentation, reception and feedback. Thus, before reading and writing have gained prominence, children have the opportunity to speak like a listener and listen like a speaker. The naturalness and the richness of the communication combined with the possibility of immediate feedback makes oral communication a good place to start in developing the stance necessary to monitor the sending and the receiving of the same message.

The transfer of the above skill, that of wearing, simultaneously, the hats of both sender and receiver, is not easily

transferred to writing and reading. For the first time, linguistic communication becomes an individual rather than a social skill during actual performance, where feedback is delayed and, indeed, sometimes never occurs. Early writing is not necessarily intended as communication at all but as a performance (King and Rentel, 1979). Perhaps the writing and reading that takes place as part of the language experience approach helps to develop the attitude that writing is intended as communication. Another link between speech and writing as communication might be made when children are asked to "... take over a conversation and sustain a subject alone". (Moffett, 1968, p. 85).

The writing process should provide opportunities to help writers to think like writers and readers. Britton (1975) has described the writing process as conception, incubation and production; Murray (1980) wrote about rehearsing, drafting and revising: these would seem to be among the many worthwhile attempts to describe the writer's process during independent writing.

Another way to look at the same process is from the point of view of the teacher as learners are prepared for writing. During pre-writing the teacher may structure the experiences provided to suit the needs of the children, both as writers and as potential audience. Thus, a selection may be made among experiences to provide for the following: experiences, appropriate in terms of the interests of the readers; thinking processes, to provide for the reader in terms of interest and logical development; and language, to name, describe and tell with clarity. Other pre-writing provisions might include experiences for rehearsing, motivation and skill building, all of which could be provided with the readers in mind.

Further studies like that of Carl Braun must be carried out, studies based on a careful consideration of theory and which themselves enlarge, if only in a small way, and clarify that theory. As a result of such studies, both experimental and naturalistic, the time will come when hypotheses will predict findings with reasonable certainty. Similarly, when writing is intended to communicate, it should be possible to teach children to become readers. And, when we understand how the uses of language arts may best be taught, taking full advantage of the pool of common knowledge about language as communication held by children, children can be lead to monitor their own uses of such a pool of competencies and to use them flexibly and with skill.

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